

Commandments, Six Articles of Belief and Five Pillars of Islam.

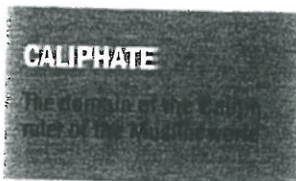
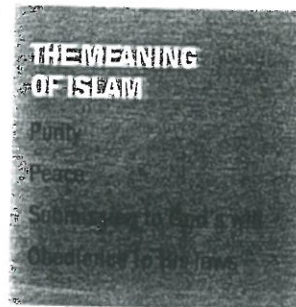
Muhammad's death in 632 CE sowed the seeds for a split in the followers of Islam. As he had no heir, he was succeeded by Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthman in the Caliphate between 632 and 656 CE.

A movement declared Ali, the Prophet's son-in-law, as his successor. The result was that Islam divided into two main groupings: Sunni and Shia [also Shi'a].

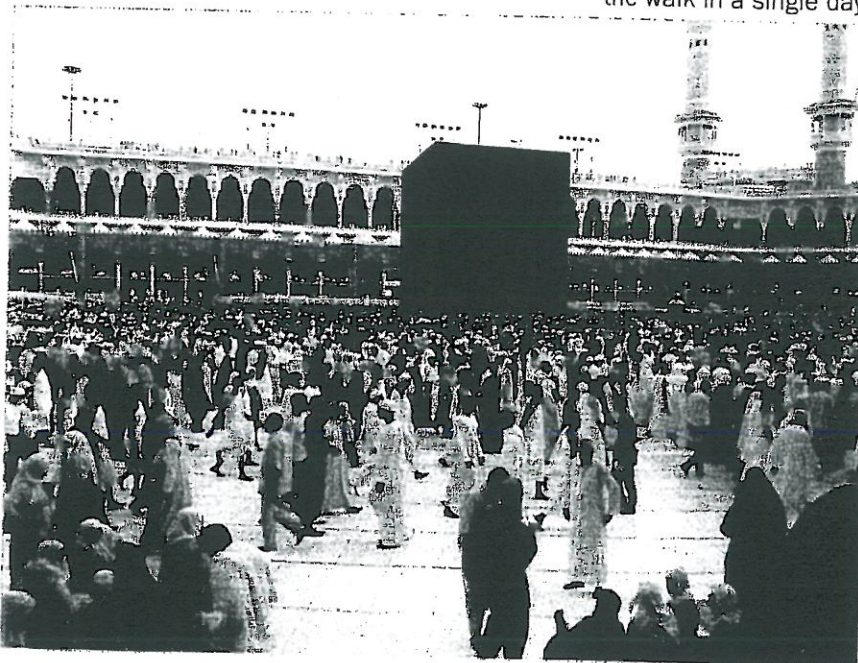
The larger of the two groups is Sunni, which accounts for around 80 per cent of all Muslims. Sunni recognise the three Caliphs who succeeded Muhammad as the leaders of Islam — Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthman — and correctly guided in their interpretations of the Quran. Within Sunni are four schools of Quranic interpretation: Hanafi, Shafi'i, Maliki and Hanbali.

Sunni believe Muhammad's state is an earthly domain; that leadership does not come from divine inspiration, but from prevailing political reality. Historically, Sunni have been more accepting of foreign rulers, provided they are elected to leadership on the basis of membership of Muhammad's tribe and allow Muslims to practise their religion.

Their flexible outlook has enabled them to incorporate new customs that do not necessarily have a basis in the Qur'an. Sunni also value the Hadith — a large collection of the sayings and actions of Muhammad and interpretations of his actions, written down by his contemporaries following his death. Sunni are predominant in most Muslim societies with the exception of Iran and Iraq.



The Kaaba is a large stone cube covered in black silk in the centre of the al Haram Mosque in Mecca. When Muslims pray they face the Kaaba. As part of the Hajj, pilgrims walk seven times around the Kaaba in an anti-clockwise direction. At the peak of the Hajj up to six million pilgrims make the walk in a single day.



**God is One and this is Allah**

**The Qur'an is God's inspired book**

**God's angels are heavenly beings created to serve God, and opposed by evil spirits**

**God sent His various prophets to the Earth at appointed times for particular purposes — the last and greatest of these was Muhammed**

**The last day of world history, the Day of Judgment, will find good and evil weighed in the balance; the wicked will be punished with the physical torments of hell; those judged by Allah and found to be just will enjoy eternal life in Paradise**

**The lives and acts of all people are foreordained by an all-knowing God; however, individuals are to be viewed as free agents, able to make or mar their own eternal future by their lifestyle while on Earth**

Most of the other 20 per cent are Shia. They follow Ali, Muhammad's son-in-law, whom they believe was the first true Caliph. Shia believe there were twelve teachers of the Quran, all descended from Ali.

Following the murder of 'Uthman by rebels in 656 CE, Ali was raised to the Caliphate. This did not receive total support from the Muslim community, creating further divisions.

Shia believe the last of the twelve teachers died in the tenth century CE. It is believed this twelfth teacher will return as a Mahdi, or divine leader, to purge Islam of all Sunni belief. Within Shia are a number of philosophical divergences. Ismailis recognise only six teachers plus Ismail, son of the sixth. Shia are predominant in Iran and parts of Iraq. Others are the Nuzaris, who live mostly in Syria, the mystic Sufis, and the Ibadites based in Oman and Algeria.

Muslims are summoned to pray five times each day by a call from the tower of the mosque, Islam's place of worship. Muhammad directed faithful Muslim to pray for five minutes on waking each morning, in the early afternoon, the late afternoon, at sunset, and before retiring for the night. A special ritual of washing hands, feet and face precedes at least one of the daily prayer sessions. A worshipper kneels, usually on a special prayer mat, placing the head face down on the ground, in the direction of Mecca.

Such prayer sessions can be conducted in the home or another suitable location. It is not necessary for the faithful to attend the mosque, except for the special service each

Friday. Attendance is compulsory for men, optional for women. The Friday service involves prayers recited in Arabic from the Quran. There is also a sermon by the Imam, the leader of the mosque. It is compulsory to remove footwear before entering a mosque, and for women to cover their hair.

Mecca, the holy city of Islam, is located in Saudi Arabia. A Muslim who can afford it is expected to make a pilgrimage to Mecca during his lifetime. Called the Hajj, it commemorates Muhammad's pilgrimage 1,400 years ago and attracts vast numbers of people from all over the world. It is held from the 8th to the 12th days of Dhu al-Hijjah, the twelfth and last month of the Islamic calendar. This lunar calendar is eleven days shorter than the Gregorian calendar used in the Western world, thus the date on which the Hajj is held appears to vary each year.

The first Muslims to reach Australia were probably 16th century fishermen from the Makassar islands [now part of Indonesia]. Remnants of their settlements and burial places have been found along the northern coastline.

In about 1850 camels were imported to provide transport in remote outback regions. With the camels came Afghan camel drivers, bringing their Islamic faith. Over the next 50 years they established a sizeable community with mosques in Adelaide, Perth, Coolgardie, Broken Hill and Maree.



The Auburn Gallipoli Mosque in western Sydney, opened in 1999, is the largest mosque in Australia

**The recital of the creed: There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His prophet**

**The recital of prayer five times daily, facing Mecca**

**The giving of tithes for the support of the poor and the extension of the faith**

**The observation of Ramadan**

**A pilgrimage to Mecca when financially able.**

The Australian Muslim population in 1901 was just under 5000; by the 1960s it had reached 8000. Subsequent immigration from Turkey, Afghanistan, Albania, Bangladesh, Cyprus, India, Indonesia, Lebanon, Malaysia, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Yugoslavia has boosted the figure to around 170 000.

An imam — the leader of a mosque — is usually brought to Australia from the homeland of the immigrants who attend the mosque. In 1975 the King of Saudi Arabia donated \$1.2 million for the construction of the



Lakemba mosque in Sydney. There are just under 60 Australian mosques today.

Approximately 60 per cent of Australian Muslims are Sunni, the rest are Shia. The Islamic Council of Australia works to unite Muslims in general, preferring not to perpetuate Sunni-Shia differences.

## Wahhabi

Now based mainly in Saudi Arabia, the Wahhabi puritan movement was founded in the 18th century by Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhib at Najd in central Arabia. It was adopted in 1744 by the Saud family.

The movement expanded to conquer parts of Mesopotamia [Iraq] as well as the holy centres of Medina and Mecca. After that the sect's fortunes waned under the Ottoman Empire.

In 1932 Ibn Saud created the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, an absolute monarchy, with Wahhabi as the dominant religious force. Wahhabi advocate a return to the basic teachings of the Quran and the Hadith and will not embrace any religious innovations.

## Druze

The Druze movement was created more than 1000 years ago by Hamzah ibn Ali and his associate, Darazi, from whom the movement took its name. Darazi declared the Fatimid Caliph of Egypt, Al-Hakim, was the tenth and final prophet. Following his death, Druze followers believed Al-Hakim was only in hiding and would one day reappear to establish a new golden age.

Druze faith incorporates Islamic, Christian, Gnostic and Eastern religious ideas. It is concentrated in Syria, Lebanon and Israel. Druze followers began immigrating to Australia in the 1970s.

## Sufi

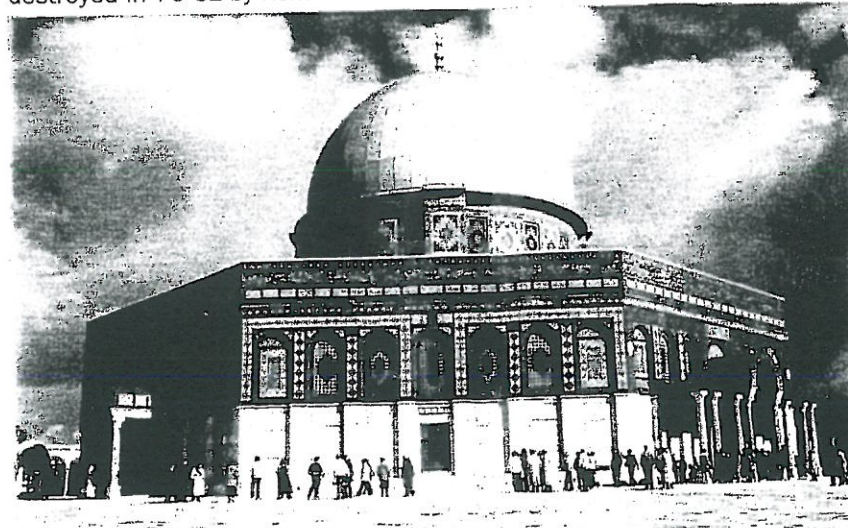
Sufism came to prominence about 1300 years ago, taking root within the first generation of the followers of the Prophet Muhammad. Some Sufis claim the line of authority goes back further, to the pre-Islamic Ikwana'l Safa.

Sufis were among Muhammad's original companions. He inaugurated them as the Saheba-a-Safa (Knights of Purity). Their name derives from 'suf', Persian for wool, and refers to the woollen robes worn by early Sufi exponents. There are about 100 Sufi followers in Australia.

## RAH/ADYAN

## Islam

The Dome of the Rock in Old Jerusalem is the holiest mosque in Islam. It was built in 691 CE on the site of a Jewish temple destroyed in 70 CE by Roman invaders.



Those who follow the religion of Islam are called Muslims. Islam was founded in the 7th century CE by the Prophet Muhammad. Muslims believe Muhammad was the last and most perfect of God's messengers or prophets, as set down in the Old Testament. These include Adam, Abraham, Moses and Jesus, among others. Muslims believe that God — whom they call Allah — is a mysterious being, all-powerful and merciful. An individual must submit to the will of Allah through Islam.

The Quran [also Qur'an or Koran] contains Allah's revelations to Muhammad, and comprises the sacred scriptures of Islam. Muslims believe it was dictated to Muhammed by the Angel Gabriel at Mecca in 610 CE. Its 114 units, called 'suras', of varying lengths cover all aspects of human life, including comprehensive details of the Islamic faith and how it should be worshipped. It includes the Old Testament, Ten